



Northern Grid / BECTA Video conferencing Project

Background:

Name of school	Bailey Green Primary School
Location,	North Tyneside - Killingworth
Size	364 Children 14 Teaching Staff 8 Support
Type,	Primary
Other participants,	Governor interest in form of visit during Conf.
Equipment	Tandberg End Point
Context	Having seen the benefits of VC in business and education we were keen as a school to investigate its potential through use in the curriculum. We are currently working towards a 'Creative' curriculum and felt that VC may provide us with another vehicle in working towards our goal.

What are your expectations?

We had no real expectations other than being able to talk to others in other locations.

What are the curriculum drivers for your involvement?

We were keen to support Science, literacy and History - however, we managed to further our projects to include French

Technical installation and set up:

Type of equipment used.

Tandberg Endpoint. We have been loaned this equipment for twelve months and with the support of the LEA have routed sound through an amplifier and have used a separate mic. The LEA have also secured an IP address to ensure security.

Layout and location of video conferencing area. We have and are using our equipment in a classroom. The equipment is wall mounted with a long lead for a moving mic.



During conferences we close the blinds to stop sunlight, we project the image onto a 79" IWB (Promethean) and sit the children in an auditorium style of seating.

Problems encountered and solutions developed with the above:

Procuring a static IP address was difficult as we had problems with the North Tyneside Gate Keeper. NGFL are still working on this to ensure our Polycom equipment will work. The increased levels of security still cause odd difficulties so we always let the Infrastructure team know that we are conferencing.

The speed of our Internet Connection also is greatly affected in our other classrooms. The LEA team have pushed our switches to full duplex to ensure speed. The LEA team also ensure that video data takes priority on the network when we are conferencing.

We had help from Video Nations and JVCS to make sure our connection was good. The physical installation of the equipment was done by the CT and the caretaker.

Northern grid gatekeeper registration was taken care of by NGFL.

JVCS registration, QA testing we organised this ourselves in order to VC with Global Leap.

We still currently have problem with our microphone which needs to have the echo cancel adjusted.

I feel it is important to point out that we had the full support of the Head Engineer for North Tyneside Schools and a very good contact at the Infrastructure Team within North Tyneside. I feel we may have encountered more difficulties without them.



Video Conferencing Partners: Royal Observatory

Who? The Royal Observatory London via Global Leap

Where? National - London

How contacted? Global Leap - Mike Griffiths

Other communication channels apart from the video conference. We contacted both Global Leap and the RO by email and telephone prior to the conference. We also had to VC with JVCS for a QA.

Other schools or other institutions. NA

What you did:

Curriculum focus. Science - The Earth and Space

How the activity fits to work pupils are already doing

As part of our SATS revision program we took up the opportunity to VC with a working astronomer at the Royal Observatory. We sent him a copy of our Science Planning and asked if there were any areas in which he could develop children's knowledge.

Actual VC Activity.

The Astronomer defined areas in which he thought the children may have misconceptions and through questioning elicited their prior knowledge and moved them forwards through discussion, images, working models and using children to enact the orbiting features of our galaxy.

Aims and objectives of the conference(s).

To motivate the children towards understanding a difficult topic and to develop the knowledge and understanding of the staff. This area of the curriculum is continually changing and we saw this as a way of keeping everybody up to date.



What the teacher / other educational colleagues did

As above

What the pupils did:

Preparation: The children were given some topic titles to research for themselves prior to the conference. The children were also asked to prepare pertinent questions with regard to their prior knowledge of the topic.

During the VC: Children stayed in seats unless asked to do otherwise by the astronomer - i.e. modelling. Children discussed with each other as well as with astronomer ideas and teacher facilitated the discussion throughout.

After VC: Children wrote a report about the conference - identifying five areas that they knew before the conference and then add to that list the new facts and information that they had learned. The children then shared their new facts with each other.

Evidence of Activity:

A condition of *Global Leap* is that we do not record the session itself. However, we were sent after the VC a copy of a PowerPoint from the RO answering further questions from the children

Use of the personal portal desktop - myclasses facility:

NA. As only one of us came to the training and the Polycom equipment has just arrived in school we have not used this facility.

Overall conclusions from the project so far:

Positives:

Highly motivational for the children.



The ability to use experts in their field.
Cross curricular - Excellent for speaking and listening / discussion
New school links
Great for SATS
Has involved our Governing Body
Has been used by all ages

Negatives:

Testing equipment can be time consuming
Organising VC's can also take time

What would you do differently if starting the project now?

Have the extra equipment working in school / tried harder to sort out problems with sound.

Reactions of those involved locally and remotely.

"The first VC I have ever seen - I'm mightily impressed and the opportunities seem endless!"

School Governor

"I'm delighted with the opportunity given to our children with this equipment. It can't fail to captivate and enhance their learning"

Head teacher

Staff - Paul Rickeard - Y6 Teacher / SMT
Dawn Bentley - Y6 Teacher
Mark Robson - Head Engineer North Tyneside LEA

Pupils - Y6 - 40 Children
Y2 - 30 Children

Parents - We contact parents with our intentions for using the VC and have had tremendous support. We have also had great feedback at parents evenings for trying new technology.

Governors - Very supportive and are delighted with the facility.

Future developments:

Where do you see your VC activity going in the future?

This is totally dependent upon the funding of our Tandberg. We are delighted with the work we have done and would relish the opportunity to build this into our curriculum further. We have taken delivery of our Polycom unit but feel the whole class solution is more appropriate for our current needs.

We have been approached by the LEA to VC with another school in the Azores and we are also part way through creating a link via Comenius with a School in Ireland. This link will hopefully be developed further by a visit to County Donegal to work with the Head and Staff of the partner School.

As part of this project we have demonstrated the equipment at the North Tyneside ICT Conference to other ICT coordinators and Head Teachers. This included a VC with the National Space Centre.

Useful Links:

www.glabal-leap.com

www.jvcs.net

Further information